Old Saint Peter's

OR

The Beginnings of Catholicity in Baltimore

By Rev. J. A. Frederick, Bel Air, Md.

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Baltimore is so closely identified with the rise and the progress of the Catholic religion in the United States, that a narrative of the first planting of our holy faith in that city must be for American Catholics a matter of very general yet uncommon interest — not that Baltimore is entitled, as regards this planting, to a conspicuous rank over other places by any priority of time. The Church was already established nearly a century in Maryland before Baltimore was founded; but it is, nevertheless, the peculiar glory of that city to have given "a local habitation and a name" to the primary see of the Union, and to have become, as it were, a second Rome for our Republic.

From the inauguration of that see till now, Baltimore has among us, in matters pertaining to the Church, enjoyed a prominence altogether unique, and exercised an influence well nigh supreme. To the establishment of the American hierarchy, more than to all other causes, are we to ascribe the vigorous growth and the marvelous spread of the Church in this country of ours. That sacred hierarchy had its rise in the person of the illustrious Doctor John Carroll, first bishop of Baltimore; here, under the favor of God's blessing, the tiny mustard seed found kindly soil and zealous care; here it flourished and developed into a mighty tree whose salutary branches now cover the length and breadth of the land.

The First Mass.

The offering of the Adorable Sacrifice is ever with us the starting point in the history of religion in a place. Respecting

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Baltimore, we must admit that the beginnings of Catholicity are shrouded in obscurity. We have no sure record at hand to inform us when, and where, and by whom, the first Mass was said, either on the original site of the town prior to its erection, or afterward in the village. We can therefore form only conjectures and surmises, and rest these on very meager evidence, since reliable data seem to be for the most part wanting.

It was on March 25, 1634, that the Maryland pilgrims landed and settled in the southern part of the province, as contiguously as possible to their fellow countrymen in the colony of Virginia. The settling of the land to the northward was very gradual, and almost a hundred years passed before the town of Baltimore, being laid off January, 1730, was begun. The location selected was on the north side of the Patapsco River, upon land belonging to the brothers Charles and Daniel Carroll. The act of Assembly designated the site as "on and about the place where John Fleming now lives, and commonly known by the name of Cole's Harbour."

Charles and Daniel Carroll were the sons of the Catholic immigrant Charles Carroll, attorney general under Charles Calvert, the third Lord Baltimore; and they had come into possession of Cole's Harbor by their father, who acquired the tract as early as the year 1701. Daniel, known also as he of Duddington, died in 1734. Charles, the survivor, was generally known as Charles Carroll of Annapolis, Esq. He was the father of Charles Carroll of Carrollton, the signer of the Declaration of Independence.

Of John Fleming, who then lived on the southwestern part of Cole's Harbor, very little is known beyond the fact that he was a tenant of the Carrolls. In the court records of Baltimore County for the year 1724, mention is made of a "John Fleming now in the seventy-fifth year of his life, of which he has spent a great part in this country and paid his taxes; he is, moreover, burthened with a family," and hence he petitions to be levy free. This is probably the same person as the one mentioned before, and whose dwelling — seemingly the only house standing on the original site — is commonly believed to have stood near

what is now the intersection of Charles and Lombard streets. A wagon-road, doubtless an old Indian trail, ran close to this habitation, and was generally known as the Great Eastern Road, corresponding somewhat with the present location of South Sharp Street, from Baltimore Street to Lombard Street, and beyond.

John Fleming was presumably of Irish origin and probably also a Catholic. The Carrolls, being devout Catholics, were known to befriend their co-religionists; and this fact, coupled with the name "Fleming," affords at least a strong hint in favor of the Catholicism of their tenant. If he, then, and the inmates of his house were members of the Church, it is certainly not beyond the bounds of legitimate conjecture to suppose that they were at times visited by the priest, who on his circuit at Easter time, for instance, or on a special errand, as on the occasion of a marriage or of a death in the family, would arrange for a celebration of Mass in the house — a thing which is by no means of rare occurrence even now in some of our sparsely settled regions.

The Great Eastern Road, as remarked before, ran close by the house of the tenant. This highway was the main road from the west, as then understood, and through the country generally. Its southern branch led up directly from Port Tobacco, an old Indian town on the Potomac River. Passing northward through Upper-Marlboro, it afterward joined the branch coming eastward from Belhaven, now Alexandria, Va., and thence directed its course still eastward to Annapolis, where again its trend was northerly and toward Cole's Harbor, or the location of Baltimore. Here the deep waters of the Patapsco intervening, a considerable detour had to be made, until the river could be forded at the falls near Elk Ridge Landing; thence the road descended to the mouth of Ferry Branch or Gwynn's Falls, since become a part of Baltimore. From the locality of Baltimore the road now ran northeasterly to Joppa, to Old Baltimore, to the location of Havre de Grace on the Susquehanna, and thence to New Castle on the Delaware, and to Philadelphia.

On this great thoroughfare the early Jesuit missionaries

probably traveled to and fro in response to the call of duty, There were Catholics settled in Baltimore County, notably on Deer Creek, twenty years before Baltimore Town sprang into existence; and although these children of the Church had the Bread of Life broken to them in somewhat later times by priests coming from the eastern shore of Maryland, yet in the beginning, may not the first visiting Fathers have set out on their journey from points on or near the Great Eastern Road, such as Port Tobacco, or St. Thomas' Manor, or Annapolis? In such a case the house of John Fleming would have been a convenient stopping-place over night, and the reverend traveler would hardly have resumed his journey on the morrow without first offering up the Adorable Sacrifice.

Thus although the grounds for our conjecture that Holy Mass was celebrated on the site of Baltimore even before the erection of the town are slender, yet the presumption is not wholly devoid of a reasonable basis.

But how soon after the erection of the town may we suppose Holy Mass to have been said? On the list of primitive lot-holders there appear but two names borne by Catholics, that of Charles Carroll, Esq., the original owner of the site, and that of a near relation of the Carrolls, Mr. John Digges, Sr. Mr. Carroll is not known to have resided in the town, but Mr. Digges may have dwelt there for some length of time since there is evidence to show that he bought a lot on South Street, designated on the original plat as No. 54, built thereon, and held possession until the year 1748.

This gentleman was also the owner of an immense tract of land in the fertile and beautiful valley of the Conewago, then in the northern part of Baltimore County, but since the running of the Mason and Dixon line accounted as belonging to Pennsylvania. Here, in the vicinity of Hanover, he established a settlement, and thence built a road to Baltimore Town. This was as early as 1736, and Digges' Wagon Road, as it was then called, is now known as Pennsylvania Avenue within the city limits, and beyond, as the Reisterstown Turnpike. In passing, it may be of interest to note that West Lexington Street, from

Charles Street to Liberty Street, was originally called Conewago Street, and Clay Street was known as Wagon Lane, presumably in connection with this highway.

Mr. Digges had his sons, notably Dudley Digges, charged with his interests at Conewago, but he is not known to have himself resided in the settlement; his own home may have been, as remarked before, in Baltimore. In this conjectural home Holy Mass may have been said, but unfortunately we have no positive proof of it thus far.

Some facts, however, bearing on this subject must not be omitted. Two Jesuit Fathers, supposed relatives of Mr. Digges, were in Maryland as early as the year 1741, namely Rev. Thomas Digges and Rev. John Digges. The latter was known as John Digges, Jr., while Mr. Digges, the road-builder, is invariably styled John Digges, Sr. This manner of identification points evidently to a close relationship, such as parent or uncle; and if the reverend missionary had either father or uncle then living in Baltimore, what was more natural than for him to make a call now and then, and on the occasion of such visits to offer the Holy Sacrifice? For it was quite usual in those days for the missionaries to celebrate in private houses and in the midst of the family circle. To add, as it were, some color of truth to this supposition, an old manuscript catalogue of the Jesuits states expressly that Rev. John Digges died in Baltimore, December 3, 1746. But as this priest attended the Deer Creek Mission in Baltimore County about this time, it is highly probable that not the town but the county is designated.

The Acadians and Mass in Fottrell Building.

But when do we meet with data more reliable? All writers on the subject are agreed that there must have been some celebration of the divine mysteries soon after the arrival of the Acadians, or French Neutrals, as they were commonly called. These Catholics, about two hundred in number, had been deported from Acadia, the present Nova Scotia, and landed in Baltimore in the winter of 1755-56. Griffith, who is generally

accurate and the first author known to the writer to broach the subject, says in his "Annals of Baltimore" that some of those unfortunate exiles were "quartered in Mr. Fotterall's (*sic*) deserted house, in which they erected a temporary chapel." As may be observed, no date is assigned by the cautious annalist to the improvised chapel, though one is free to infer that the arrangement for divine services was made very soon after the French exiles had taken possession of the deserted house.

B. U. Campbell, whose contributions to the Church's local history are highly valued, wrote later than Griffith, and he furnishes some interesting details. "Here (in Fottrell's house)," says he, "it is believed the holy sacrifice of the Mass was first offered in Baltimore. The priest who was stationed at the Manor occasionally visited Baltimore and celebrated Mass." Finally, on the authority of a gentleman, who, he tells us, was one of the little congregation in Baltimore in 1768, he adds: "The Rev. Mr. Ashton, who at that period was the resident priest of Carroll Manor, visited Baltimore once a month," etc. The careful reader will take note that Campbell does not state positively when and where the first Holy Mass was offered in Baltimore. He says simply, *it is believed* to have been at that time, and in that house; for in truth it may have been earlier and elsewhere as already shown in this article.

The First Priest.

With greater assurance, however, Campbell designates the priest stationed at Doughoregan Manor as the first officiating minister. This, it would seem, can not be admitted without some reserve and further explanation. It may, indeed, be questioned if there was a priest residing at the Manor so early as the year 1756; in fact very few of the clergy resided there at any time. The home of the Carrolls was at Annapolis, where the family had a chapel and apparently also a domestic chaplain from a very early day. The mansion at Doughoregan seems to have been used rather for a summer residence; yet it is quite possible that the chaplain may have accompanied the family in

the summer of 1756, and may have, as Campbell tells us, proceeded from the Manor to Baltimore Town at the pious summons of the forlorn Acadians.

But cautiously as one may grant this much, it can not be further conceded that the chaplain at that period was the Rev. Mr. Ashton, if by that name we are to understand Father John Ashton, and by that period, the year 1756, since it is known with certainty that Mr. Ashton was, at the time mentioned, but fourteen years of age, not ordained, of course, and not yet come into the country. Not till twelve years later do we hear of him as on the missions of Maryland. Are we, then, to suppose that no missionary attended Baltimore before the landing of Father Ashton? Such a supposition can hardly be admitted. The numerous body of French Catholics was certainly not left those many years without religious consolation; and furthermore, as we know, other children of the Church were beginning to take up their residence in town.

Thomas Scharf, in his "History of Baltimore City and County," makes note of a school opened in the village in 1757, by Mary Ann March, a Catholic, and shows that many scholars were taken from the Protestant schoolmaster and forthwith sent to the new school. Now this successful school-mistress would hardly have ventured upon such an enterprise without the prospective aid or promised support of her co-religionists, who must, therefore, as we think, have been at hand. Finally, as we shall see later on more fully, the first church property owned by Catholics in town, was bought as early as June, 1764, three years before Father Ashton's immigration.

What Father, then, if not Ashton, attended the Acadians and other Catholics in Baltimore in those early days? The writer is at loss to tell, for the answer will depend greatly upon first ascertaining the mission or locality whence the Reverend Father came, and this is still in dispute.

Deer Creek, about thirty miles northeast of Baltimore, was at that period a missionary station in Baltimore County, and of it mention has been made already in connection with Rev. John Digges, Jr., who is supposed to have died there in 1746.

Father Digges was succeeded by Rev. Bennett Neale, S.J., a grandson of Captain James Neale, a brother also of Rev. Henry Neale, S.J., and a great uncle of Archbishop Neale. This Father, who was for nearly a quarter of a century in charge of the Deer Creek Mission, may have attended Baltimore, but in spite of some vague tradition in favor of Deer Creek, there are no convincing proofs at hand. The missionary's residence, built about 1741, and once known as "Priest Neale's Mass House," is still standing, about six miles north of Bel Air, Md., is in a good state of preservation and is inhabited to-day. Its locality is still known as Priestford, and the Great Eastern Road, spoken of and described before, was not very distant. Rev. Bennett Neale's missionary circuit is known to have included, at least for a time, the Conewago Settlement, which lay distant about forty miles toward the northwest, whence also one could have traveled to Baltimore Town by Digges' Wagon Road. Of the extent of his circuit southward we know, unfortunately, almost nothing; yet it must have taken in Joppa, then the county seat, and all that region contiguous on Bush and Gunpowder rivers. Scharf, in his "History of Baltimore City and County," speaking of the primitive days of the Church in Baltimore, refers to Father Neale, but says nothing of his ministering there.

It is possible that the mission house of the Jesuit Fathers at Bohemia in Cecil County, Md., supplied the missionary for Baltimore, for the journey could have been made very readily by boat across the waters of the bay. Indeed, at one time the writer flattered himself that he had come upon the very data requisite for proof. In an old journal of accounts, once kept at Bohemia, he discovered some entries which seemed to point to Rev. John Lewis, S.J., as the man beyond all doubt. Here are the items: "Expended by Rev. Mr. Lewis on a journey to Baltimore, 9 shillings." This entry was made in 1753. Three years later appear two other items, both recorded under the same date, namely June 11, 1756. "To traveling expenses to Baltimore, 10 shil. 10½ pence." "To ye French Neutral, 11 shil. 3 pence." At first sight this looked like very satisfactory evidence in favor of a sacred ministration in Baltimore Town

by the gifted and saintly Father Lewis, afterward vicar-general of the Catholic clergy in Maryland, and their first choice for the post of administrator-general. But upon reflection it seemed more reasonable to put a different construction on the wording. The entries read Baltimore and not Baltimore Town, as the village on the basin of the Patapsco was then commonly called. The county, then, and not the town, is meant, and the name of the county in turn stands for the mission within its borders, namely Deer Creek. The following entry in the same journal makes this quite plain: "David, formerly (Rev.) Mr. Neale's negro at Deer Creek in Baltimore, etc." Father Neale was, then, residing at Deer Creek, Baltimore County.

As for "ye French Neutral," it must be borne in mind that about five hundred of these wretched exiles had also been taken up the Delaware bay the previous November, and probably it was one of these who found his way to Father Lewis at Bohemia to become the object of his bounty. Before parting finally with Bohemia and Father Lewis, it must be admitted that the combination in that old journal, of "Baltimore," "French Neutral," and "1756," as it stands on the same page, is a singular and striking coincidence, to say the least. Still, such things occur constantly in the experience of every investigator. Data, like other sublunary things, turn out to be not what they seem, and the sweet fruit of assured success that lured you on is changed into a bitter morsel of disappointment.

Search in northern Maryland, then, fails to furnish our coveted prize — the name of that missionary who attended Baltimore Town in the days following closely upon the arrival of the Acadians. We must, hence, extend our inquiry in other directions.

Fifteen miles due west of the Monumental City, in a region once commonly known as Elk Ridge, and of which the present "Landing" is but a reminiscence, is situated the old plantation home of the Carrolls — Doughoregan Manor — with its ancient mansion house and chapel still standing and in use. Here Charles Carroll of Carrollton and others of his kin lie buried. The mansion in part at least dates back to the year 1717, and

it is highly probable that the chapel also in some form, if not in its present one, has existed from approximately as remote a period. From this ancient shrine, if we are to give credence to the tradition recorded by Campbell, Rev. Mr. Ashton wended his way to Baltimore Town, and held divine service in the unfinished and abandoned Fottrell building, where some of the Acadians had found a temporary refuge.

This tradition, though certainly at fault as regards Rev. Mr. Ashton, who had not yet arrived in the country, nor even been ordained, ought not perhaps to be rashly and wholly rejected. May it not be that, by reason of some similarity of sound or appearance two names have become confounded, and that the more recent and popular one has usurped the place of the older and true one? Substitute Ashbey for Ashton, and the chief difficulty that had confronted us is at once removed; for in our supposed year — the year 1756 — Rev. James Ashbey was not only in Maryland, but was the Superior of the missions; the very man, therefore, to whom the extraordinary case of the two hundred Catholic exiles would very probably be first submitted. And what more natural than that he, the Superior, should interest himself in the matter and come in person to arrange for and begin the holy work of ministration among the poor outcasts? Whether he continued his personal ministration for any length of time can not be decided, but as his own home was on the Potomac River, at St. Thomas' Manor in Charles County, he probably appointed some missionary who had a nearer residence. That this was actually at Doughoregan can not be affirmed with certainty; yet it would appear that the same Father who ministered at Doughoregan also officiated in Baltimore, hence the long association of Carroll's Manor with the first Catholic congregation in town.

But how shall we account for the name Ashton supplanting that of Ashbey? In the first place, Father Ashbey, like many of the early missionaries, had two surnames; he was known not only as Mr. Ashbey, but also as Mr. Middlehurst. This of itself would lead to confusion. Then again, he passed away early from the scene of his labors, dying in September 1767,

that is, forty-eight years before the demise of Father Ashton. The latter was a man of brilliant parts. He held the important post of procurator-general for eighteen years, and in the discharge of that office he must not infrequently have come to Baltimore on business relating to the Church. He even may have regularly officiated in the town the first years after his arrival on the missions. Thus his name became only too exclusively identified with the primitive days of the Church in the place. Finally, it is evident that Campbell gathered much of his information not from original sources, but from hearsay, and hence was liable to fall into error.

Our last claimant for the honor of having in the beginning supplied Baltimore Town with the service of a priest is White Marsh. This mission is situated in Prince George's County, near the confluence of the Big and Little Patuxent. It is distant from Baltimore about thirty-two miles, from Doughoregan Chapel about twenty-five miles, and from Annapolis fourteen miles. About its early history little is definitely known. The land is said to have been acquired about 1724. In 1748 Father Robert Harding is set down in the catalogue of missionaries as laboring in Prince George's County, which seems to indicate a residence already established at White Marsh. Shea remarks: "White Marsh is said to have been founded, but was probably revived, in 1760." All this obscurity militates against its claim. On the other hand there are some things which are most favorable.

According to a memorandum furnished the writer and taken from "The Mirror" of July 25, 1874, "Father Haspin from White Marsh was the first priest to say Mass in Baltimore." But there is no Father Haspin to be found on the list of early missionaries. The nearest approach to the name is Harding, Rev. Robert Harding, mentioned before. He, however, left Maryland about 1750, to reside in Philadelphia.

On June 4, 1764, Rev. George Hunter purchased the first Catholic church property in Baltimore. The deed of conveyance mentions him as of Prince George's County, in other words, of White Marsh. His location there, however, could

have been only temporary, for being the Superior at the time, his regular residence must have been at St. Thomas' Manor, Charles County. But, be that as it may, we have here clearly a link between White Marsh and Baltimore, and one suggesting, in a manner, some previous relationship. Father William P. Treacy (Catalogue of Early Jesuits in Maryland) tells us that "Rev. Bernard Diderick attended Baltimore and Elk Ridge from 1775 to 1784," but says nothing of his residence. If this clergyman did not make his home at Elk Ridge with the Carrolls, then his nearest mission-house would be White Marsh, and the most likely dwelling-place for him. Finally, among the Jesuits themselves, they at least who have given the subject some special thought, there seems to be an opinion more or less general — a family tradition, so to speak — in favor of the claims of White Marsh. And in fact, if it be permissible to identify with White Marsh, as probably we ought, the two Carroll chapels, the one at Annapolis and the other at Doughoregan Manor, then its claims are easily superior to those of any rival.

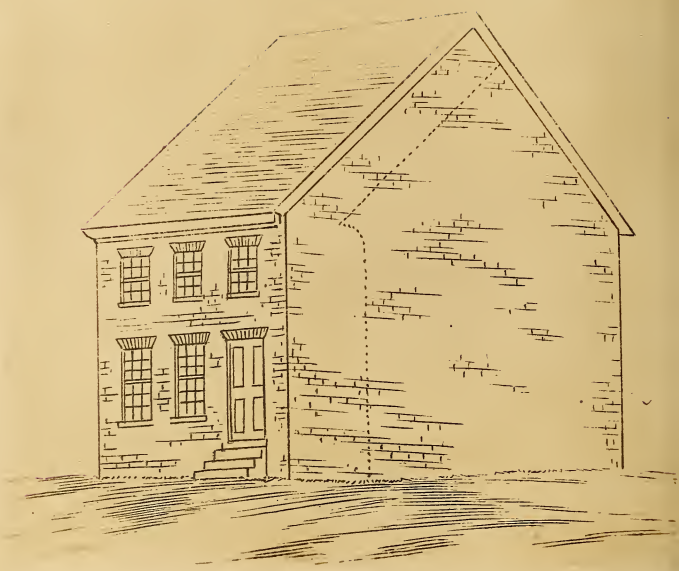
And now to sum up: With the meager data that we possess at present, we have been able to form some plausible conjectures, forsooth, but to reach no sure and definite conclusion. We shall need more light and clearer proof before we can announce with any assurance who was the first priest to offer the holy sacrifice of the Mass in Baltimore, and who were the missionaries after him that attended the faithful before the appointment of Rev. Bernard Diderick in 1775. All that we can say is, that before the year 1730, perhaps some traveling missionary, like Father Joseph Greaton, officiated in some private house on the original site of Baltimore, and that afterward, perhaps, in the town the same was done successively by Father John Digges, Jr., Father Robert Harding, Father James Ashbey, Father George Hunter, Father John Ashton. To these conjectured names might, moreover, be added those of Father Bennett Neale, and of Father John Lewis, and a place assigned to them between the names of Fathers Harding and Ashbey.

Church Records.

When we bear in mind that the Catholic Church, here in Maryland, is coeval with the first founding of the colony, that the labors of her priests date back to the very day of the arrival of the Ark and the Dove and the landing of the pilgrims, we are surprised to find the records of those many years so scanty and few. Comparatively little has come down to us from the past regarding the early missionaries themselves, their various fields of labor, and the work which they accomplished.

This dearth of historical data is owing to various causes. Throughout nearly the whole of the Colonial Period the open exercise of our holy religion was proscribed by law, and whatever was done in this respect had to be done in quiet and secrecy. Many of the Fathers had aliases, or double names, by which they were known. Little was committed to writing, and of course nothing or next to nothing was published by them. Where accounts are given the records are obscure, and at times purposely disguised. Few records were kept of baptisms, marriages, and burials. Common prudence may have dissuaded therefrom, or, what is equally probable, the missionaries being so few in numbers, their charges so very extensive and laborious, had little time to make, and slight convenience to preserve, such records. They were almost constantly in the saddle, and the sacraments were administered and the sacred offices performed here, there, and everywhere, with but little chance for jotting down a record. Even where we know registers to have been kept, they are in many instances no longer to be found, having been lost by one or another of the accidents to which such frail material is liable. Specially deplorable are the many losses occasioned by fire. Such an accident, about 1851, destroyed the sacristy of Doughoregan Chapel, and with it the registers and papers kept there.

And yet, in spite of all that has just been said, there is still on hand a mass of documentary matter, which is even now awaiting the patient research and elaboration of the historian to make our local annals replete with the narration of deeds



St. Peter's
The supposed primitive part
built about 1770.

and events, which by turn will challenge our admiration and edify our souls, touch our sympathies or provoke our just indignation, make us feel proud of our Catholic heritage and raise our hands to heaven in thanksgiving or, perhaps, hang our heads in confusion. But a better day is already dawning. The Jesuits at Georgetown are establishing a chair of Colonial History in their university, and before long Baltimore must have its Catholic Historical Society, for the times are at length ripe for it.

First Church Property.

The fourth day of June 1764, will be forever a red-letter day for the Catholics of Baltimore. On that day Rev. George Hunter, S.J., purchased from Charles Carroll of Annapolis, Esq., the lot, number one hundred and fifty-seven (157) in Baltimore Town, and paid him in hand six pounds sterling money. This was the first property acquired by the Church in the Catholic metropolis, a quarter of a century only before the erection of the see of Baltimore.

The deed of conveyance is not found recorded in the City Land Office, and it was only after a long and persistent search that the writer was fortunate to find a copy of the document at Annapolis. Father George Hunter was at the date of the purchase Superior of the missions, and according to the indenture a resident of Prince George's County; which would seem to indicate that he was then, at least temporarily, living at White Marsh. Charles Carroll, Esq., was not he of Carrollton, but the latter's father, also known as he of Doughoregan. Lot No. 157 was situated not on Charles Street, as it is sometimes erroneously stated, but on Little Sharp and Saratoga streets, that is, at their intersection. Little Sharp was then known as Forest Street, and Saratoga as North West Street. On these grounds stood the first Catholic Church edifice erected in Baltimore. Its site is now occupied by the old Calvert Hall building, a large brick structure with Gothic front and high stone steps, the property at present of ex-Governor Brown. Directly across Little Sharp Street, west, is the present Royal Arcanum build-

ing, and diagonally across Saratoga Street, southwestward, is the Hotel Rennert. That additional part of the property, afterward known to be situated on the corner of Charles and Saratoga streets and extending toward Little Pleasant Street, was Lot No. 156, an adjoining lot acquired very many years later by Archbishop Carroll from Charles Carroll of Carrollton.

Lot No. 157 was, at the date of its purchase, the extreme northwest angle or limit of the town land; and Forest Street (Little Sharp) forming then the western outskirt or boundary line of the town, rose grandly up the hill, not a mere lane or alley as now, but a broad thoroughfare, like Liberty Street close by, and with a width four times that to which Little Sharp has been narrowed. The location was the most elevated in the village and the spot, one might say, ideal. About it and beyond, stretching to north and west, was the primeval forest with its varied species of finest timber, superb trees, for which the environs of Baltimore are still famed. On the horizon, toward the setting sun in summer, the eye might have discerned a break or cleft in the forest, where Digges' lumbering wagon-road emerged; and, perchance, the eye might have detected at the same time, hard by, a clearing where stood the "One Mile House" or tavern, destined to be turned some years after into the hallowed home and pious halls of learning of "the French Gentlemen" — the Sulpician St. Mary's Seminary. Following the horizon thence southward, you might have espied at a greater distance Mount Clare and perhaps caught a glimpse even of the splendid mansion of Charles Carroll, Barrister; and yet farther beyond, you might have seen the dense smoke rising from the Baltimore Iron Works, built by the Carrolls and Taskers at the mouth of Gwynn's Falls. Directly before you, as in a vast amphitheater, lay now in all its pristine beauty the shimmering Patapsco with its well-known early divisions — Spring Garden, Basin, and Harbor. To the left, at the harbor's front, you viewed Fell's Point — as yet but a land of promise — with only a very few straggling houses to arrest attention, but in due time, though the years pass slowly, to be honored with the distinction of possessing the second Catholic temple,

St. Patrick's. Below your gaze, still looking eastward but farther to the left, there looms up Jones Town or Old Town, already a compact settlement on the left bank of the Falls. And now, too, but closer to one's feet, you looked down upon the winding stream, known as the "Falls," and upon the "Marshland" and the "Meadow," and to your attentive ear might even then rise the song of the boatman, as he poled or steered his laden barge through the great loop of the Falls, at the foot of the very hill whereon you were standing.

Above that rocky bank, just where the stream curved farthest southward, Edward Fottrell had built, but never completed, the house which for a time afforded shelter to some Acadians, and even to the blessed Lord in His sacrificial presence. It stood near the northwest corner of Calvert and Fayette streets, but had probably now already disappeared. Beyond that point southward, but close by, ran the one long street of the town — Market or Baltimore Street — then, as now, the main thoroughfare. Its scattered, irregularly-lined houses dotted the way from the "Marsh" to the great gully near Forest (now Sharp) Street, where it was crossed by the Great Eastern Road, an oldtime Indian trail, as said before, and now only a partially cleared wagon road, but already the forerunner of the National Pike and of the great eastern and western trunk lines. Sidling up the hill directly toward you this road approached within hallooing distance and having formed, as may be supposed, a junction with the wagon-road from Conewago, it descended the steep declivity which faced the great loop of the Falls on its western bank.

But beautiful as was the panorama spread out before one's gaze, one could not have helped pronouncing the spot deserted and lonely, for few and sparse were the buildings in its neighborhood. No residence north or west; a very few, perhaps, at the foot of the hill, on Conewago (now West Lexington) Street; one residence on North West (now Saratoga) Street, corner of Charles; across Charles Street a small house of worship belonging to the German Presbyterians; down Charles Street near New Church (now East Lexington) Street, on the left hand,

old St. Paul's Church, and opposite to it, on the right, the little red hip-roofed parsonage; and thence down the street all the way to Market Street not another dwelling. Beyond Market Street, near Lombard Street, was "French Town" — the little settlement of the Acadians.

In spite, then, of the beauty and the prominence of the location, the purchase of 1764 must have been for not a few years ill suited for the residents of the town, since the majority of the people lived at a considerable distance, and the high sand-hill was hard to climb, both summer and winter.

First Chapel.

The newly purchased lot seems to have lain idle for some years before any attempt was made to erect a building thereon; yet, meanwhile, it may have been used already as a place for Christian burial. The Fottrell building could not have served long for a chapel, and the celebration of Mass having ceased there, the faithful were, no doubt, accustomed to assemble in some private home, possibly at Mr. Richard Whelan's, according to an old tradition. In the year 1770, however, the Catholics of the town began to bestir themselves, and, says Griffith, "Messrs. (John) McNabb, (Robert) Walsh, (William) Stenson, (Michael or Peter) Houk, (John) Hillen, (Henry) Brown and (Richard) Whelan with the French emigrants and others . . . erected a part of St. Peter's Chapel."

The site selected for this primitive part was the northwest corner of the lot, which was also the point most elevated. The building, it seems, fronted on Forest (Little Sharp) Street, which having not yet been contracted to a narrow lane as now, was considered more eligible than Saratoga Street. Moreover the nature of the site, and the ancient practice of facing eastward at worship, favored the orientation. The dimensions of the edifice are said to have been twenty-five by thirty feet; the style was that of a plain two-story residence with high gables, and the material was the common red brick. Outwardly there was nothing to distinguish this structure as a church or chapel

and, in fact, it could not well have been thus fashioned at the time, for the law prohibited Catholics from having any public house of worship, Mass and all other religious services being tolerated only in the privacy, as it were, of the domestic circle.

Slow was the progress made in building, and before the completion of the edifice the promoters of the enterprise became insolvent and a suit was entered in chancery for a debt of 217 pounds current money, that is, about $575; no insignificant amount in the eyes of our impecunious ancestors, though to us the sum may appear rather trivial.

For want of other defendant the case was entered on the docket of the March term of court 1773, as against Francis Laurentius Ganganelli, that is, the then reigning Roman Pontiff, Clement XIV. The plaintiff was John McNabb, who, be it observed, brought suit not in his own behalf, but "for the use of the assignees," as stated on the docket. Henry Brown, merchant, Baltimore Town, furnished special bail. The docket also shows that "a short note (had been) filed, and a copy sent," and that "both writ and copy (were) to be set up at the door of the Roman Catholic chapel and at the courthouse door." The case dragged on through several terms of court. The writ citing Francis Laurentius Ganganelli was returned "Non Est," and finally, in 1774, the case was "struck off (the docket) by order of the plaintiff's attorney."

This was indeed a singular case and Griffith does not hesitate to pronounce the sueing of the Pope ludicrous; and so it must naturally strike one at first sight. But may it not be that at that particular juncture there was apparently none else to proceed against in due form with any show of caution? The Catholic congregation was not a body recognized by law; the attendant priest, being a Religious, was only the agent of his order or society; and that society was itself just then on the very eve of its dissolution. As an expediency, then, and a last resort the suit of "McNabb versus Ganganelli" is not so ludicrous as impious.

Even in its unfinished state, we are told, divine services

had been already held in the new edifice, but during the progress of the suit, and probably for some time thereafter, the church remained closed and the congregation, so Griffith tells us, assembled in a private house on South Charles Street. It is to be regretted that we possess nothing more definite upon this point; but as the French were settled mostly in that quarter of the town, we may suppose that some good family like the Golds or the Gutteraus offered the use of their house for the accommodation of the little flock.

Who was the priest in charge is not known for certain, as we have already seen. Possibly, or even probably, it was Father John Ashton; for if he ever ministered in Baltimore, it must have been about this period. In November 1767, he is believed to have arrived from Europe, having been shortly before ordained a priest of the Society of Jesus. He had been a fellow student with John Carroll, the future bishop, and if there was actually no relationship between them, there was at least a genuine friendship, though Ashton was considerably younger. Born in Ireland in 1742, he was but twenty-five years of age when he began his missionary labors in Maryland. His first appointment on the missions is not known, but in 1772 he is reported as being a resident of Anne Arundel County, which would seem to indicate that he lived with the Carrolls, either at Annapolis or at Doughoregan Manor, this latter place being then, prior to the formation of Howard County, also in Anne Arundel. From either home he could easily reach Baltimore Town, carrying with him, according to the reports, the sacred vestments and other requisites for the Holy Sacrifice. In 1773, he was appointed to White Marsh in Prince George's County, there to begin his long pastorate of twenty-nine years.

Father Ashton was in many ways a remarkable man, but he was noted especially for his administrative ability. When the Catholic missionaries of Maryland and Pennsylvania undertook, in 1784, to form a corporate body — "Ye Body of ye Clergy" — he was elected procurator-general, which office he held for eighteen years. He was also one of the first directors

of Georgetown College. With Very Rev. John Carroll and Rev. Robert Molyneux, he formed a committee to draft the petition for a bishop, which was sent to Rome, and with them he signed the document. The sermon at the close of the first synod of Baltimore, Nov. 7, 1791, was delivered by him. Everywhere, indeed, he seems to have taken a prominent part.

In such of his letters as the writer had an opportunity of perusing, only one slight allusion is to be found connecting Father Ashton with Baltimore. Writing in 1801, to Bishop Carroll, he says: "I built the house in which you sleep." But, inasmuch as this part of the presbytery may have been erected after he had become procurator-general, his words may mean simply that he furnished the means for building.

Though the suit against the Pope had been withdrawn, it appears the chapel remained closed for some length of time. According to Campbell, a Mr. P———, who was the principal creditor, had locked up the church and retained the key. It is difficult to say who it was that is *so mysteriously* designated by the author of "Desultory Sketches"; but if the writer may venture a guess, he would suggest the name of Mr. Brian Philpot, Jr., who was a noted broker at that day, and a gentleman who had considerable business of a financial nature with the church authorities for years after.

Campbell also states, that through the address of Captain Galbraith and his company of volunteer militia, then stationed in Baltimore Town, the key was gotten possession of one Sunday morning, and the church reopened permanently.

No report, as far as known, has come down to us of the dedicatory celebration; nor can we divine why precisely the chapel was put under the invocation of the Prince of the Apostles. Perhaps the close proximity of St. Paul's Episcopal Church may have in some way suggested the propriety of naming the first Catholic temple St. Peter's. Apropos of this title, it may be of interest to quote an extract from Father Ashton's correspondence with Bishop Carroll. Speaking in reproof of the policy of Napoleon Bonaparte, he exclaims: "Who knows but ye Chair of Peter may yet be translated to

America, and that St. Peter's Church of Baltimore may be substituted for St. Peter's of Rome, and that ye Bishop of Baltimore may be identified with ye head of Christ's Church on earth!" And who knows but this early surmise may yet one day in some manner prove true!

Treacy ("Old Catholic Maryland") is authority for saying that Father Bernard Diderick attended Baltimore and Elk Ridge from 1775 to 1784. That this missionary had charge of the congregation in Baltimore has never, it seems, been questioned. He left the Deer Creek mission late in the year 1774, and probably took up his residence with Father Ashton at White Marsh.

Father Diderick (Diedrich), called at times also Father Rich, was a Walloon, that is a native of southeastern Belgium; and he was probably selected for the post in Baltimore because of his familiarity with the use of French, the language of the great body of Acadians. It would seem, however, that in spite of such qualification, he was not altogether acceptable to them; for they lodged complaints against him with the Abbé Robin (a chaplain in Rochambeau's division of the army) as the Abbé himself tells us in his narrative; but the subjects of the complaint were of a trivial nature.

It is to be remarked that the Maryland missionaries were, as a rule, either Englishmen or natives, many, indeed, the noblest sons of Maryland and "to the manor born." The instance, therefore, of the Belgian was rather an exception, and it would seem that the Rev. Father was likewise an exception in other respects. A man of fine parts, good and zealous, no doubt, he was also choleric and contentious. He opposed the erection of a school at Georgetown, and in his opposition to the establishment of the sacred episcopacy in this country he was yet more pronounced. He even went so far as to draw up a memorial and to send it to Rome, protesting against the appointment of a bishop. No doubt, he was true to his convictions and honest in his opposition; but, as results have clearly shown, he was utterly mistaken. About Christmas, 1782, he seems to have relinquished his care of the Baltimore mission. He died

in September 1793, at Notley Hall, Md., opposite Alexandria, Va.

Toward the close of the Revolutionary War some French troops encamped in "the Forest" north of St. Peter's Church, that is, on the very grounds where the Cathedral now stands; and Campbell tells us that "on one occasion a grand Mass was celebrated with great military pomp. The celebrant was an Irish priest, chaplain to General Count de Rochambeau. The bands of the French regiments accompanied the sacred service with solemn music, the officers and soldiers attended in full uniform, and a large concourse of the people of the town was present." Such display was doubtless very attractive, and may have in some degree familiarized the general public with the ceremonies of the Church, but the presence of the French troops was not in every way beneficial to our holy religion. The little colony of Acadians, so zealous heretofore, suffered perceptibly from the baneful influence exercised upon its members through intercourse with bad, irreligious adventurers who were among the military, as Rev. Doctor Carroll has left it on record in his writings.

First Resident Pastor.

Father Diderick had for successor Rev. Charles Sewall, who enjoys the unique distinction of being Baltimore's first resident priest. The year 1784 is commonly given as the period of his arrival, but according to the evidence furnished by the old baptismal register, still preserved at the Cathedral, it would appear that his pastoral administration began as early as December 25, 1782. In that register, on page 66, Father Beeston, who was rector next after Sewall, has recorded and officially signed the following note: "The preceding 65 pages were transcribed from the original Register of Baptisms kept by my Predecessor, the Rev. Charles Sewall. No regular Register of Baptisms was kept at this place before the said Rev. Charles Sewall resided here." Inasmuch as the first entry is made on Christmas day, 1782, and others follow closely in regular succession, we have reason to conclude that the date 1784, heretofore held as the

beginning of Father Sewall's term, is erroneous. The latter date was probably the year when the church, after extensive improvements, was reopened and the priest's dwelling newly built was now first occupied.

Church and Pro-Cathedral.

The new incumbent, as is evident, set to work without delay upon remodeling the old chapel, which could now, thanks to our political severance from England and the incidental religious freedom accruing to us, be converted into a public house of worship — a church.

The improvements made were considerable. They consisted apparently in the extension of the chapel to more than twice its former length, and the addition of a presbytery or priest's house. Fortunately we are not left wholly in ignorance regarding the appearance of the little group of buildings then provided. A painting executed by Thomas Ruckles in 1801, and preserved for a great number of years in the Elder family of Baltimore, gives us a fair representation of this portion of Saratoga Street at that early period. Owing to its age, however, and an injudicious coat of varnish superadded, the picture has become very obscure, some of the details being effaced or barely discernible. Still upon close scrutiny enough is distinguished whereby to form our judgment.

And first we observe that the bed of the street is at a higher level than now. It was in fact as high as and probably even higher than the walled-in plots of ground which are still to be seen opposite Hotel Rennert. We next perceive that the church is a brick structure in two obvious sections, the want of uniformity of line between the old and the more recent, rendering each portion quite distinct externally.

The writer has already stated it as his opinion that the original building or chapel fronted on Forest (now Little Sharp) Street. When the improvements were now to be undertaken it was found advisable to select Saratoga Street for the new frontage of the church, for the reason that Forest Street

St. Peter's Pro-Cathedral and
Presbytery in 1801.

was about to be sacrificed to the interest of Liberty Street, and from a grand thoroughfare sixty-six feet wide, it was to be contracted to the present narrow lane known as Little Sharp Street.

There was, besides, another advantage in the change of orientation; it would not only facilitate the use of the wider end of the lot, but would also and above all permit the addition to be joined to the southern gable end, which being prolonged, both sections, old as well as new, would assume more the style of a church edifice.

By reason, probably, of the grade on Little Sharp Street, a lower base line, it seems, was adopted for the addition to St. Peter's Chapel. This part being planned neither so high nor so wide as the original portion, left a conspicuous offset in roof and wall. The side elevation shows two rows of windows, the upper ones being nearly square, but the lower ones about twice the height of the former. Two of the small square windows show also in front, and must have afforded light and ventilation to the choir gallery; and above these, at but a short distance, runs a heavy horizontal molding, which, after having reached the eaves, thence ascends to the gable point, forming thus a plain triangular cornice. The doorway is pointed and probably possessed some slight adornment which is, however, not perceptible in the picture.

As for the dimensions of the building, these can be given only approximately. The original chapel is said to have measured twenty-five by thirty feet, and assuming this estimate to be correct, it looks, judging by the painting, as if the addition had retained the original width of twenty-five, but had increased the length, perhaps some forty feet. Now bearing in mind that the new part was joined to the side of the old part, by which fact only twenty-five feet of the original space was available, we find the total length after the improvement to have been sixty, or at most sixty-five feet. Such the dimensions of the lowly structure which for a quarter of a century served the illustrious Carroll for a Cathedral! Little wonder that he should have called it "a paltry one."

You search the picture in vain for cross, or bell, or even

chimney; there is not the slightest indication of these on the church, and they were evidently not to be seen thereon in the year of grace 1801. In aftertimes, however, a small cupola with bell was added, and we can not doubt that a cross also surmounted this; but we may rest assured that no chimney ever loomed over old St. Peter's; for the heating of churches is, as it were, only of yesterday — a comfort of which our godly and not very remote ancestors were wholly ignorant, or seem not to have stood in need.

As regards the arrangement and appearance of the interior, a few words must needs be added. The body of the church was exceedingly plain and unattractive, according to common report. The choir gallery was situated over the entrance, and there were also side galleries. These, in an edifice only about twenty-five feet wide, must have looked clumsy indeed.

There is still extant in miniature what is believed to be a facsimile of the sanctuary. The little copy appears to be modeled on a scale of one inch to the foot, and is probably reliable in its main features. Taking it for a guide, we find that the sanctuary is neither square nor semicircular in outline, but rhomboid, that is, in shape very similar to the outline of the upper half of a boy's common kite. Two columns, attached to the side walls and supporting some light tracery running across the ceiling, seem to separate the sacred precincts from the main body of the church, and between them is fixed the balustrade or altar railing, in length measuring about twenty-one feet. At these columns the side walls — probably only inside partitions — begin to converge toward the rear wall till the space between them is contracted to but fourteen feet. Here stands the one, plain, wooden altar; the wings of it extending to the side walls, the table about seven feet in length, and the tabernacle uncommonly high. Above the altar hangs a picture of the patron, St. Peter the apostle, and surrounding this there is a somewhat elaborate baldachin. There are but two steps of ascent, though a bishop's altar has usually four, and the lower one, at the gospel side, is extended in such a manner as to serve for a platform to the bishop's throne.

Such apparently was St. Peter's pro-Cathedral in 1801. All evidence of beauty and splendor is lacking, and everywhere plainness and simplicity reign supreme.

The brick presbytery serving also later for the archiepiscopal residence, was a modest two-story-and-attic building, which stood adjacent to the church on the east side, and had between fifty and sixty feet frontage on Saratoga Street. In Ruckle's picture it has the appearance of having been enlarged, and probably it measured but half this length originally. Perhaps an addition was built in 1790, when Very Rev. Dr. John Carroll was in England for consecration.

There was also a God's acre or cemetery about the church, which, however, does not appear in the picture. It was located mostly on the eastern side, that is, toward Charles Street, but some graves were also in front on Saratoga Street, according to reliable witnesses. Few people to-day would suspect that graves and tombs were once a familiar sight in this fashionable quarter; but, in truth, the southwest corner of Charles and Saratoga streets was in olden times the only spot at that point not occupied by a graveyard. Northwest was St. Peter's, up to two generations past; northeast, the German Calvinists'; and southeast, St. Paul's. No wonder that, when in 1800 Dr. Davidge erected an anatomical hall on the site now occupied by the Hotel Rennert, an outcry should be raised by the neighbors, and the populace should demolish the structure. The fear of ghouls was too pertinent under such circumstances. The church grounds were enclosed by a picket fence on Saratoga Street and probably also on Charles Street, but there appears to have been a wall of brick or stone on Little Sharp Street.

Whilst the improvements were in progress the original chapel could still be used for services, and the intervening wall needed not to be disturbed until the addition was completed. When the wall in part was finally removed, it was only necessary to turn the altar so as to face the worshipers now assembled in the new building, and to erect the partitions mentioned before.

Father Sewall, as observed already, entered upon his pastorate in Baltimore about Christmas 1782, he being then in the

fortieth year of his age. He was a native of Maryland and connected with the best families of the land, tracing his descent back to the Hon. Henry Sewall of Mattapany-Sewall. He had a brother also a priest — Rev. Nicholas Sewall — who was quite noted in his time and who, having gone abroad for his studies, never returned to this country, but labored all his priestly life on the English missions. Charles likewise made his studies in Europe, as in fact all the Maryland missionaries did in those days, but he returned to his native province in 1774.

Before coming to Baltimore Town he had exercised the holy ministry for nearly ten years on the missions in Maryland and Pennsylvania, and was therefore well qualified for his new charge. Baltimore at that period counted about eight thousand inhabitants, and possessed besides St. Peter's, seven other churches, representing Episcopalians, Presbyterians, Quakers, German Calvinists, Baptists, Lutherans, and Methodists. The number of Catholics living within the limits of the town and in the environs must have been somewhat near six hundred, for the register kept at St. Peter's shows seventy-four baptisms had been administered in the course of the year 1784.

Father Sewall appears to have been of a sweet and placid disposition, and known to every one as a good and holy soul; he was also a zealous priest, a true and tender friend and a polished gentleman. Noted especially for his administrative qualities, his abilities as an orator are said by Campbell to have been "very moderate." He was, nevertheless, a good English scholar, as his many letters still extant amply testify. Campbell's criticism, too, must not be taken very seriously; he probably means only to convey the idea that Father Sewall was no orator in comparison with Rev. Dr. John Carroll. That ornament and glory of the American Church was indeed head and shoulders above his confrères in this and other respects.

Father Sewall's pastorate was not without its apportionment of trials; indeed, he experienced so much difficulty with the work in hand that he lost heart for a while, and seriously entertained the thought of returning to Conewago, Pa., where he had labored for a short period some years before. In this

connection it may be interesting to quote the words of the saintly Father Pellentz, the pastor then in charge of the Conewago mission. "I always thought that he (Father Sewall) could do more for God's greater glory and the salvation of souls in Baltimore than here. For that reason I advised him in his troubles to have patience and courage. To the same intent I called to his remembrance that Saints Ignatius and Theresa always expected great success when they met with serious obstacles at the beginning of a new college or monastery. The hardships Mr. Sewall suffered made one think that Baltimore in time will be a very flourishing mission."

Think of it, this was written only a little more than a century ago, and it seemed still questionable then if the Baltimore mission would eventually be prosperous!

But success was being even then assured by the appointment at Rome of Father John Carroll as Prefect-Apostolic, and by his coming to Baltimore to make his residence with Father Sewall. The latter was also now contented to retain his post, and did not resign his charge till the year 1793, when he was succeeded by Rev. Francis Beeston. Leaving Baltimore then he retired to Bohemia, in Cecil County, and thence, after some years, withdrew to St. Thomas' Manor, in Charles County, where he continued his labors in spite of increasing bodily infirmities. In a letter to Bishop Carroll he mentions the long and fatiguing rides which his reverend assistant was obliged to make, and then adds concerning himself: "As for myself, I may sing the negro's song, 'Ho, boys, 'most done.'" And in another of a later date, after speaking of his sufferings and the hardships of long sick-calls, he writes: "Though I am broken down with former missionary rides and labors, I will go as long as I can, *Si adhuc sum necessarius non recuso laborem.*" He died November 10, 1806, and lies buried at St. Thomas' Manor, in Charles County, within view of the beautiful Potomac and amidst the hallowed remains of many other early missionaries of Maryland.

By-Events.

Some events of special interest to the Catholics of Baltimore may be briefly noted here, as they transpired just prior to, or near the time of, Father Sewall's departure. The Sulpicians, or French Fathers, as they were then more commonly called, arrived in Baltimore in the year 1791, and established themselves in a house designated then "The One Mile Tavern," which they converted into home, seminary, and chapel. The house stood on Digges' Wagon Road, later known as Hookstown Road, but now called Pennsylvania Avenue. The present St. Mary's Chapel, however, was not built till many years later.

In the year 1792, the first step was taken toward erecting a chapel in the southeastern part of the town, still known as "the Point," and this movement ultimately resulted in the building of St. Patrick's Church.

In the summer of 1793, about one thousand whites and five hundred blacks, all professing the Catholic religion and speaking the French language, landed in Baltimore. They were refugees from the island of San Domingo, and many of them took up their residence in town, and thus greatly augmented the number of the faithful. Some of the newcomers settled in the neighborhood of the seminary and formed a little French flock, who worshiped in the chapel for many years.

Some years later, at the close of the century, the German Catholics then resident in town united their efforts and built St. John the Evangelist's Church. It stood in close proximity to St. Peter's, namely at the corner of Saratoga Street and Park Avenue, and its site is now occupied by St. Alphonsus' Church. The writer's father was a trustee of the old church, and was instrumental in transferring the title of the property to the proper church authorities.

First Bishop.

Reverend Francis Beeston was the successor of Rev. Charles Sewall; but before giving some details of his life it may be

proper to insert at this point a few observations respecting the great and good Father John Carroll, who came to Baltimore to make his home with Father Sewall. It is not the writer's purpose to include in his narrative the distinguished prelates who presided over the see of Baltimore in those early days; abler pens than his have long since portrayed their lives, and their history is known to all. Yet it seems some exception should be made here, in favor of a particular mention of Doctor Carroll, inasmuch as he, more than the others, was so intimately connected with old St. Peter's.

It was in the humble presbytery adjoining the church that for more than a quarter century he abode, and finally expired. Here he received his visitors and guests, the great and the lowly. Here he gave advice and administered consolation; here he encouraged, warned, approved, rebuked, as the cases demanded. Here he carried on that large and admirable correspondence embracing not only this land but also foreign countries. Hence he set out by horse on his long journeys, so rough and fatiguing, and with prospects of coarse fare and uncomfortable lodgings. Here he labored, prayed, and suffered, and proved himself the good shepherd that gives his life for his sheep.

In that "paltry" pro-Cathedral — and never had he any other — he held the first synodal meeting of his clergy. Within its sacred precincts the first ordination of priests and consecration of bishop in this country and by him took place. Here, too, the first prelates met him and formulated their earliest pastoral letter to the faithful of this country. In this simple, yet privileged temple he preached those sermons and delivered those discourses which attracted large and distinguished audiences and which were admired by men of every creed and by the freethinker as well. In it, finally, his own solemn obsequies took place.

It was in the winter of 1786-87, that Father Carroll, appointed Prefect-Apostolic two years previously, arrived in Baltimore to make his future home at St. Peter's. Though, like another Paul, he had the care of all the churches resting on him, he did not disdain the humble routine work of the parish,

and in the intervals between his visitations through his very extensive charge, he gave his time freely to whatever ministry fell to his lot at home. It is noteworthy that, even when bishop and archbishop, his name appears repeatedly as minister of the sacrament on the baptismal register; nor is it only in connection with the children of the higher class that this is observed; not infrequently the favored subject was the offspring of some plain laborer or poor foreigner. His pious and fatherly visits to the sick and needy, it is true, are not found recorded here below, but they were, no doubt, numerous, and may have often, too, partaken of the nature of those made occasionally by the saintly Kenrick, one of his illustrious successors, who more than once was discovered hurrying in the earliest dawn to some humble home in an alley or courtyard. As citizen, he was known as a lover and admirer of his country, and he was ever foremost in all literary, educational, and philanthropic projects of his day. As bishop, he was a father and a model to his clergy, and a true shepherd to his flock. He was a sincere friend to all without distinction.

On Sunday, December 3, 1815, this faithful steward of the Master surrendered his noble soul to God, in the eightieth year of his age, having been priest since 1769, bishop since 1789, and archbishop since 1808.

The second resident rector of St. Peter's, Rev. Francis Beeston, arrived in Baltimore early in the spring of 1793, coming directly from Bohemia, the old mission in Cecil County, to exchange places with Father Sewall. He was an Englishman, having been born of Catholic parents in Lincolnshire, in the year 1751, and was consequently in the forty-second year of his age. Previous to his charge of Bohemia, he had exercised his holy ministry for four years in Philadelphia.

Of a cheerful disposition, open and frank, he was esteemed excellent company and was himself very fond of good companionship. But he was noted especially for his assiduity in the performance of his priestly duties, and this with his other virtuous traits won for him the confidence of his bishop and the attachment and love of his people. Particularly devoted to the

sick, when pestilence was stalking through the town he was seen night and day at the bedside of the stricken, comforting them and preparing them to meet their Judge. He twice contracted that terrible scourge of earlier days, yellow fever, and was brought to death's door, but no sooner had he recovered, when he hastened to offer anew the consolations of religion to those still suffering.

After sixteen years of strenuous labor at St. Peter's, he died suddenly, toward the close of December, 1809, in the fifty-ninth year of his age, greatly lamented by the venerable archbishop and by all the people.

Archbishop Carroll had asked for Rev. Enoch Fenwick, a member of the Society of Jesus, then recently revived, and upon the death of Father Beeston, appointed him rector of St. Peter's. Father Fenwick continued in office for ten years, when he was recalled by the Superior of his order and made president of Georgetown College.

Descended from Cuthbert Fenwick, one of the illustrious pilgrims of Maryland, Rev. Enoch Fenwick was born in lower Maryland, St. Mary's County, in 1780. He was ordained priest by Bishop Leonard Neale at Georgetown in 1808. His brother Benedict, who was ordained at the same time, afterward became Bishop of Boston, while still another brother, called George, also embraced the clerical life.

Father Enoch Fenwick, says one of his biographers, "in person was tall and straight, a finished gentleman of elegant manners." He was the friend and companion of the venerable Archbishop in his declining years, and was with him to comfort and console him in his dying hour. He continued in charge of St. Peter's during the short term of Archbishop Neale's administration, and the first years of Archbishop Marechal's tenure of office. He took a special interest in the building of the new Cathedral, and for many years was very active in collecting funds for its completion. He died at Georgetown on November 25, 1827, and his remains repose there in the college cemetery.

The New Cathedral.

The site of the new Cathedral, of which mention was just made, was after much discussion selected by Archbishop Carroll and purchased from Colonel John Eagar Howard. It was almost within a stone's throw of old St. Peter's, directly north of it, and just on the summit of the hill. The corner-stone of the basilica was laid on the 7th of July, 1806. The work of construction progressed slowly till 1812, when it was entirely suspended, to be resumed, however, three years later. The dedication took place in 1821, on the 31st day of May. A full history of the Cathedral was published in 1906, in connection with the centennial celebration that year.

Upon the elevation of Doctor Whitfield to the archiepiscopal chair, his faithful assistant at St. Peter's, Rev. Roger Smith, was promoted to the rectorship, being the fifth in succession after Father Sewall. He was a native of Maryland, born in Frederick County in 1790, and was of distinguished lineage. His father was Henry Smith, a cousin of Capt. John Smith of the American Revolution, and his mother, before marriage, was Catherine Queen, a granddaughter of Colonel Edward Pye. He was closely connected with such noted old Maryland families as the Brookes, Whartons, Doynes, Sewalls, Neales, Fenwicks, and Taneys. His preparatory studies for the priesthood were made in part at Mount St. Mary's College, Emmittsburg, but principally at St. Mary's Seminary in Baltimore, where also he was ordained on October 2, 1815.

St. Ignatius' Church, now called "The Hickory," but in Father Smith's time, and for a quarter century after, better known under the name Bel Air, was his first appointment — an appointment still made by Archbishop Carroll. This charge was a specially arduous one at that period, because a number of outer missions or congregations, some of them widely sundered, were attached to the head church, and because for two years the reverend pastor was obliged to continue his residence in Baltimore at the seminary, for the reason that no home was

provided for him in his parish. Those outer missions included Carroll's or Doughoregan Manor; Williamson's Chapel, near Pikesville; Hunter's or Jenkins' Chapel, Long Green Valley; Captain Macatee's, or the Barrens, now Pylesville; Priestford, Deer Creek; Havre de Grace; and Conewingo, in Cecil County.

Late in the summer of 1820, he was transferred to St. Peter's, where, it appears, he continued his residence ever after. He died April 3, 1833, aged forty-three years.

Father Roger Smith was earnest, zealous, and straightforward in all his doings, and though of slight frame and delicate constitution was very successful in his ministry, being indefatigable in the work of his sacred calling. He was distinguished for his strong Christian faith, his simplicity of life and his all-embracing charity. He was the founder of a benevolent organization, "The Charitable Relief Society," established in 1827, which had for its object to befriend the poor and the afflicted, regardless of all distinctions as to denomination, age, sex, or color. "Equally dear to him, as in the sight of God, the salvation of the slave and his master, he was everywhere ready with his word of encouragement or reproof. The wealthy did homage to his virtue and the poor had the Gospel preached to them."

His remains rest in Bonnie Brae Cemetery, and on his tomb are engraven these appreciative words: "He died a Martyr of his Zeal and Charity."

Rev. Edward Damphoux, D.D., the archbishop's secretary, became rector next in turn, and, like his predecessor in that office, he is believed to have made his residence mostly at St. Peter's.

He was already in deacon's order when as a young man he left France in company with Rev. Ambrose Marechal, who was for a second time embarking for Maryland. Ordained priest two years later, that is, in 1814, and having joined the Sulpicians, he was professor, and also, for nine years, president of St. Mary's College, then attached to the Baltimore Seminary. He became assistant at the Cathedral in 1829, and upon the

death of Rev. Roger Smith, he was promoted to the rectorship, which office he held till 1839.

Doctor Damphoux interested himself greatly in the welfare of old St. Peter's, which was, so to speak, rejuvenated under his fostering care, and whose old parishioners were devotedly attached to the Rev. Father in spite of his French accent and some eccentricity of manner, for which he was noted.

After leaving St. Peter's he lived in South Baltimore, where he built old St. Joseph's Church in 1839. Ten years after, when very much broken in health, he resigned this charge and for a while said Mass in a little oratory built in Mr. Frederick Crey's yard on Madison Street, near Jones Falls, and is said to have also attended the chapel of the Carmelite Nuns an Aisquith Street. He died in the seventieth year of his age, August 7, 1860.

Rev. Dr. Damphoux is believed to have been the last of the rectors who made their residence at St. Peter's; his immediate successors, Rev. Thomas Butler and Rev. Charles I. White, lived in the archbishop's house, and their ministry appears to have been confined to the Cathedral. The venerable old church and the faithful still worshiping there were at that time, however, in good and zealous hands, the care of them being assigned to the assistant rector, Rev. Peter Stanislaus Schreiber.

This estimable priest was a native of Baltimore, born in 1803, and of German extraction, though, it is said, he spoke German quite indifferently. Having completed his clerical studies at St. Mary's Seminary, he was ordained priest in 1827, and assigned as help to St. Patrick's Church, Washington, D.C. He next became pastor of St. Peter's Church, Richmond, Va., then under the administration of the Archbishop of Baltimore. Sent again to Washington, he was made pastor of St. Peter's Church in that city, whence he was called back to Baltimore in 1833, and appointed to assist Rev. Dr. Damphoux in the increasing work at old St. Peter's.

Here he set to work with unabated ardor, laboring with scrupulous fidelity till the final closing of the church in 1841. Now transferred to St. Vincent's, Baltimore, first in the capacity

of assistant, but afterward advanced to the position of pastor, he was overtaken by a fatal illness six months after his late promotion, and expired September 8, 1845.

Father Schreiber was greatly admired for his simplicity of life and the conscientious discharge of the duties of his sacred calling. He was much beloved and held in high esteem by the people. The writer remembers, when a child, frequently hearing appreciative and affectionate mention made of this venerable priest by his parents, who in years before had often been devout worshipers in old St. Peter's.

This holy man of God was of a rather timid and retiring nature. In one of his letters to the archbishop he mentions his great aversion to the soliciting of contributions for the Church, saying he would much rather himself give than ask of others. He was buried at the seminary, though not a Sulpician, and his ashes are mingled with those of his pious instructors — the godly sons of Father Olier.

A brief mention may here be made of the other reverend assistants; some, who afterward became rectors, have already been noticed. One, who at first was assistant, became later not only rector, but even the head of the diocese; this was Most Rev. James Whitfield, the fourth incumbent in the See of Baltimore. He was assistant from 1818 to 1820, rector till 1828, and archbishop till 1834.

Rev. Dr. Matthew O'Brien, a Dominican, was stationed at St. Peter's from 1809 till 1811, when he was transferred to ~~Philadelphia~~ New York. He returned to Baltimore where he died in 1815, aged 65 years.

Reverend Fr. Ryan succeeded to Father O'Brien, but held the appointment only for some months in 1812.

Rev. Samuel S. Burgess came in 1819, and stayed till 1821. He was an English Franciscan.

In 1831, Rev. Arthur Wainright, also an Englishman, was appointed to aid Rev. Roger Smith, after whose decease he left Baltimore and went to Pottsville, Pa., where he was pastor of St. Patrick's Church. He died about 1839.

Rev. Dr. Charles C. Pise, assistant at St. Peter's from 1827

to 1832, was one of the most noted priests in this country in his day. Born at Annapolis, Md., in 1801, he, while a student at Georgetown College, became a member of the Society of Jesus. Sent to Rome to prosecute his studies, he severed his connection with the Society before receiving priesthood. He was ordained in 1825, at Baltimore, and sent to Washington. It was whilst stationed at St. Matthew's Church that he acted as chaplain to the United States Senate. After five years spent at St. Peter's in Baltimore, he visited Rome a second time and there won, amid great applause, the degree of Doctor of Divinity and other high honors. He now affiliated himself with the diocese of New York and after filling several appointments died in 1858, as pastor of the Church of St. Charles Borromeo, Brooklyn.

Dr. Pise was a man highly gifted, a brilliant orator, an able and refined controversialist, and an elegant writer whose books were widely read and admired.

It was but natural that St. Peter's — the "paltry" pro-Cathedral — should be mightily overshadowed by the grand basilica erected on the crown of the hill. Upon the dedication and opening of the latter the venerable old shrine was for some years mostly used as a chapel, where indeed the sacraments were still administered and also the daily Mass was continued, but where the more solemn offices of the Church ceased to be performed. Some of the clergy continued to reside in the old presbytery, but Archbishop Marechal, finding it more convenient to live closer to the new temple, occupied a house standing on the eastern limits of the old grounds and fronting on Charles Street, and situated about midway between Saratoga Street and Little Pleasant Street. The archiepiscopal residence, now the cardinal's, was not built till 1829.

The eclipse suffered by old St. Peter's was only partial. About the year 1829 the regular Sunday services were resumed, and although the chapel was but an adjunct to the Cathedral, which, spacious as it was, could not accommodate the increasing number of worshipers, it served to all purpose and intent as a parochial church up to the day of its final demolition.

In 1839 the church was renovated and a new organ purchased for the choir; but this was only like the vanishing glory of the sunset. Only two years later, in 1841, Father Schreiber, the faithful attendant, was withdrawn, the sacred edifice closed, and an order issued that the site be at once cleared and gotten in readiness for a new structure — a Catholic school and place of assembly — Calvert Hall.

Thus passed away from our eyes, speedily and for ever, this primitive shrine — the lowly cradle of Catholicity in Baltimore — but the memory thereof should live, and the story thereof be told as long as Catholics abide in the land.